

**MSR Stakeholder Working Group**  
Orange/Villa Park/Orange Sphere of Influence  
October 22, 2004

Meeting Notes

*Meeting notes prepared by Danielle Ball.*

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting began at approximately 10:00 am.

**Public Comments**

- ♦ None

**Agenda/Desired Outcomes**

The facilitator reviewed the intended focus of the meeting and desired outcomes as follows.

**II. Review of Revised Vision/MSR Report Format**

LAFCO Project Manager Kim Koeppen presented an outline for the MSR report. She indicated that the vision plan could be used separately or in conjunction with the MSR report filed with the Commission. She added that the report would provide the framework for the nine determinations, which would be completed by the end of December 2004. She anticipated that the Commission would consider the MSR public hearing in January or February 2005 and encouraged the stakeholder working group members to attend.

In response to the working group's questions, Ms. Koeppen offered the following points of clarification:

- The MSR report presented to the Commission in January or February 2005 would be received and filed. The agencies' spheres, she said, would be updated within the next three years.
- The nine determinations will address all agencies within the MSR focus area.
- Analysis of the MSR process and next steps will be outlined in the MSR report presented to the Commission.
- If the working group chooses to meet and discuss the nine determinations, a meeting could be scheduled in early to mid January 2005.
- The Keith Companies completed the utilities study and submitted its report to the affected agencies for review and comment. LAFCO, she said, would refer to the results of the utilities study to address some of the nine determinations.

### **III. Finalization of Focus Area Vision Plan**

The MSR working group reviewed the draft 20-year vision plan page-by-page. The text was revised during the meeting.

In summary, the comments generally included:

- Minor word adjustments
- Minor changes to format
- Minor clarifications on data and introductions to/explanations of data tables
- Clarification of the MSR geographic boundary description related to the canyon areas
- Attachment of the detailed brainstorm committee products as part of the report. LAFCO reiterated the intent to attach the full copy of each committee presentation
- Identification of each brainstorm committee participant
- Adding wording in the vision plan to explain that the working group had not addressed certain issues. E.g. The group acknowledged some sensitive issues exist but the group elected not to address them. LAFCO noted that these issues would likely be discussed in the executive summary

Page 3 – The group resumed a dialogue about how to portray the role of the canyon areas in the MSR. After considerable discussion, the group came to consensus on wording that was included in the revised vision plan.

### **IV. Next Steps for Vision Plan**

The next steps were determined as:

- LAFCO staff will re-distribute the revised vision plan.
- When completed, LAFCO staff will distribute the full MSR report to the working group for review and comment.
- LAFCO will schedule an additional working group meeting in January 2005 to allow the working group as a whole to review and comment on the MSR report and nine determinations.

### **V. Evaluation of MSR Working Group Process**

The working group engaged in an evaluation of the MSR working group process and offered the following feedback:

- The process was difficult because of other “outside” the process goings-on (i.e., East Orange environmental process, East Orange utility study). Stakeholder working group (SWG) members wanted to know what was happening in those processes and how they would impact its work.

- “This is not the process we signed up for.” The group lost focus, concentrating on abstract issues such as quality of life and vision instead of the nine determinations. SWG members were not interested in one another’s needs/issues; they did not feel they had the right nor did they find it prudent to be involved in one another’s areas and therefore did not concentrate on one another’s work; “we should stick to our own interests.”
- “SWG shows how government fails us everyday.” The MSR process was a microcosm of the way government fails to do what is needed. Another layer of government is often created in lieu of addressing the need and moving on.
- Group chose not to discuss difficult/divisive issues.
- The process provided positive networking opportunities, and working group members developed relationships as a result of process, even becoming better acquainted with people they already knew.
- The process opened avenues of communication between IRWD and SCWD. The reopened dialogue can be attributed, in part, to the MSR process. The group hoped to see the same happen with the City of Orange.
- The group made the following comments:
  - MSRs should not be about grand visioning but about deciding spheres of influence. Group indicated that it is not LAFCO’s function to be in the business of grand visioning.
  - The group didn’t address the difficult issues.
  - Issues for Santiago were not addressed.
  - The group did not agree on the purpose of the process.
  - The stakeholders wanted to influence decision about service provision. They expressed concern that the decision will be left to LAFCO, rather than the agencies with the necessary experience and expertise to represent the best interests of the public.
  - The process concentrated too much on “fluff” and vision
  - The process was not flexible enough to go where the participants wanted it to go. LAFCO wanted a vision plan, while members wanted to solve specific issues and topics directly related to the nine determinations. The group felt precluded from giving information pertinent to process; not given enough latitude.
- About the Process
  - The process included too many members. The membership of the working group and the varying interests were too diverse for the group to achieve focus and problem solving.
  - The SWG did not address the real issues at hand.
- Members came into the process with different expectations. The group should have set common expectations up front. Perhaps a questionnaire prior to first meeting might have helped set clear expectations.
- The assignment should be thoroughly identified first, and then determine who needs to be in the group to address the assignment.
  - What do you want the group to do?

- Who is relevant to do the assignment?
- The group should have concentrated on the nine determinations rather than 20-year vision plan and quality of life.
- The process, rather than being stakeholder driven, but LAFCO driven. Using the terminology “stakeholder driven” for a process designed and controlled by LAFCO sets up false expectations.
- Assignments to brainstorm groups were not what were needed by the water agencies.
- The process was not flexible enough to accommodate the members’ needs and interests.
- The process was revealing (i.e., defined the agencies their specific interests), providing an opportunity for involvement by the public as the end user.
- The definition of the focus area should be carefully thought out and justified. Focus area should reflect clear boundaries as well as a rationale for the boundaries. Also, it is imperative to consider how the impacts to those outside the boundaries will be factored into the process. E.g.: An area of contention resulted when SCWD was discussed but the canyon areas were excluded.
- The group suggested the completion of a cost/benefit analysis of the process. The agencies spent a lot of time and effort to attend the meetings; what was the net benefit.
- LAFCO should have anticipated the need to have electeds on the SWG (i.e., in the case of small districts with few/or no staff).
- Having a stakeholder process is valuable only if the participants have input on the issues to be addressed PRIOR to convening the process.

## **VI. Adjournment**

The meeting concluded and was adjourned at approximately 1:00 pm.